

NEBRASKA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

OFFICIAL INTERPRETATION



Interpretation Number: 00-06

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Pamphlet Number: NFPA 72, 2002 ed.,
NFPA 101, 2000 ed.

Section(s): 5.5.2.4.1, 4.6.12.2

Comments:

All commercial fire alarm systems must follow plan review, inspection and approval procedures.

Applies to security systems including fire alarm devices. Proper listing of all components is required.

Question: Are fire alarm systems that are not required by code or the authority having jurisdiction required to be installed and/or maintained in accordance with NFPA standards?

Response: Yes, as specified below.

Fire alarm systems must be properly installed and maintained per NFPA 72. The presence of the fire alarm equipment, whether it is a pull station, smoke alarm or other device may give occupants a false sense of security if they see that fire protection is present and the equipment does not provide proper coverage, or is not in working order.

Where fire alarm equipment is placed to provide occupant notification, proper spacing and placement of the audible and visual devices must be provided.

Proper maintenance of nonrequired systems must be provided. Installation, inspection and maintenance in accordance with NFPA 72 is necessary for all fire alarm equipment. Household fire alarm equipment must meet the requirements of Chapter 11 of NFPA 72. Commercial equipment must meet chapter 10 of NFPA 72. The inspection of commercial fire alarm equipment must be conducted by a licensed fire alarm inspector.

When an owner does not wish to properly install, inspect or maintain nonrequired fire alarm systems/components, the system/components must be removed completely.

Signature:

Date: 02/01/07

Title: John E. Falgione, State of Nebraska Fire Marshal

STATE OF NEBRASKA



Nonrequired or Voluntary Fire Alarm Systems

Dave Heineman
Governor

John Falgione
State Fire Marshal

When a nonrequired or voluntary fire alarm system is provided within a building it must meet the requirements of NFPA 72, the same as all required fire alarm systemsⁱ. This memo applies to fire alarm systems that protect life, property or both by indicating a fire within the protected premises.ⁱⁱ

The requirements below do not apply to systems or devices intended as supervisory only. Examples of supervisory systems are specific hazard protection, fire sprinkler or fire pump panels and devices.^{iii,iv}

A fire alarm system must include:

- Audible notification appliances^v
- Visual notification appliances^{vi}
- At least one manual pull box when fire detection or waterflow devices are present^{vii}
- A fire alarm control panel that is properly listed for fire alarm purposes^{viii}

When smoke or heat detection is provided voluntarily it must be installed to meet code with the exception that detection spacing rules do not apply.^{ix}

ⁱ NFPA 72, 2002 edition; 6.2.3.1 Nonrequired protected premises systems shall meet the requirements of this Code.

ⁱⁱ NFPA 72, 2002 edition; 6.2.1* Purpose. The systems covered in Chapter 6 shall be for the protection of life or property, or both, by indicating the existence of heat, fire, or smoke within the protected premises.

ⁱⁱⁱ NFPA 72, 2002 edition; 6.8.5.7.1 The provisions of 6.8.5.7 shall apply to the monitoring of sprinkler systems, other fire suppression systems, and other systems for the protection of life and property for the initiation of a supervisory signal indicating an off-normal condition that could adversely affect the performance of the system.

^{iv} NFPA 72, 2002 edition; 5.5.2.4.2 Where nonrequired detection devices are installed for a specific hazard, additional nonrequired detection devices shall not be required to be installed throughout an entire room or building.

^v NFPA 72, 2002 edition; 6.8.6.1 Fire alarm systems provided for evacuation or relocation of occupants shall have one or more notification appliances listed for the purpose on each floor of the building and so located such that they have the characteristics described in Chapter 7 for public mode or private mode, as required.

^{vi} Title 156, (NAG); 4.28.1 General. Alarm systems required to be accessible by 4.1 shall comply with 4.28. At a minimum, visual signal appliances shall be provided in buildings and facilities in each of the following areas: restrooms and any other general usage areas (e.g., meeting rooms), hallways, lobbies, and any other area for common use.

^{vii} NFPA 72, 2002 edition; 6.8.5.1.2 For fire alarm systems employing automatic fire detectors or waterflow detection devices, at least one fire alarm box shall be provided to initiate a fire alarm signal. This fire alarm box shall be located where required by the authority having jurisdiction.

^{viii} NFPA 72, 2002 edition; 4.3.1 Equipment constructed and installed in conformity with this Code shall be listed for the purpose for which it is used. Fire alarm system components shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturers' installation instructions.

^{ix} NFPA 72, 2002 edition; 5.5.2.4.1 Where installed, detection that is not required by an applicable law, code, or standard, whether total (complete), partial, or selective coverage, shall conform to the requirements of this Code.

Exception: Spacing requirements of Chapter 5.